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THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM FOR: The President  
From : Henry A. Kissinger <sup>HK</sup>  
Subject : Your Meeting with Chairman Mao

This book provides you with background material for your meeting with Chairman Mao Tse-tung, including papers which give you a sense of his personal style and viewpoints, essays on his historical approach to the key domestic issue (national development) and the key international issue (the Sino-Soviet dispute), and the verbatim records of President Nixon's and my talks with the Chairman. This paper will focus more sharply on your meeting itself -- what you can expect from him, and the lines I suggest you take.

Purpose

The meeting will, of course, be the centerpiece of your trip and will publicly symbolize the ongoing development of the US-Chinese relationship. For the Chairman, it puts his personal, authoritative stamp on Chinese policy, both for his people and the world. He will also be reconfirming the basic policy lines for the other Chinese leaders such as Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-p'ing who will be expected to carry them out within his framework.

You in turn will be placing your personal imprint, for the first time to the Chinese as President, on our policies toward China and the world generally. You will be charting your directions as someone they must calculate that they may have to deal with for the next five years. Words alone will not be convincing to the Chinese; they will judge us by our

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actions. Nevertheless, the meeting will give you the opportunity to demonstrate your own personal style and strength, your conviction that the US must play a vigorous international role (including working with our friends to counter Soviet hegemony), and your commitment to the further development of Sino-US relations.

Setting

Per the Chinese custom with all foreigners, and reflecting their Middle-Kingdom mentality and sense of drama, the Chinese will probably notify us only an hour or two before the meeting that it is taking place. We have made clear to them that you do not wish any substantive discussions on your day of arrival in China. Your session is apt to be early, on the second or third day, so that the Chairman personally can set the framework for your visit.

You will be driven through a side gate of the Forbidden City to his residence (about ten minutes from the Guest House). You and the other Americans attending the meeting will be escorted into the Chairman's den, a large and rather sparse, high-ceilinged room. There will be a semi-circle of big easy chairs and tall lamps. Behind them are shelves of books which may be covered by drapes. The Chairman will stand with some difficulty and greet you and the other American guests, shaking hands and exchanging small talk while Chinese photographers take pictures. (They never allow foreign photographers to be present, since they wish to control the situation, select the pictures they want to use in the media, and touch up the images of the Chairman.)

After the photographers are escorted out of the room, the participants in the meeting will then be seated. Only tea will be served. The likely participants on the Chinese side are Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-p'ing, Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua, Ambassador Huang Chen of the Chinese Liaison Office, Vice Foreign Minister Wang Hai-jung (who is reputed to be Mao's grand niece and is always closely associated with the Chairman) and two interpreters, (one who is

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the Foreign Minister's wife and another who was originally born in Brooklyn).

You will find the Chairman mentally alert but physically very frail. He is not able to stand up for long periods or escort you out of the room (as he had always done until my last visit). He will gesture vigorously with his arms and hands as he speaks. He now has great difficulty talking and will thus express himself in two ways: sometimes he will speak in a slow grunt-like manner, with the interpreters often having to repeat (and perhaps slightly extrapolate) his words back to him for confirmation before translation; often he will write down what he has to say, with his female nurse holding the pad for him, and this in turn is translated by the interpreters, often with confirmation/extrapolation. He will conduct the conversation almost entirely on his own, with an occasional query to Vice Premier Teng. Because of his physical condition and style his interventions will be generally quite brief, but his laconic style carries great depth and meaning. As you will see from reading the past transcripts, he makes rich use of analogy, symbolism, allusion, and earthy humor. He will cover his agenda in a seemingly casual, even haphazard manner, but by the time he is finished he will have conveyed all the main points he wishes to get across in comprehensive, though very economical, fashion.

He will take the lead in indicating when the conversation is finished; it should last 1-1/2 - 2 hours. He will then rise to bid you farewell and you will be escorted by Vice Premier Teng to your limousine. We will check immediately with the Chinese on the wording of the brief communique they always put out after a Mao meeting, with the key element being thejectives they use to describe the session, e.g., "fr .", "friendly atmosphere", "wide ranging", etc.

#### His Approach

I believe you can expect the Chairman to sound the basic themes that he did with me last month (see the transcript and analysis at Tab H). His overriding

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concern will be with the international situation, particularly the Soviet threat and the US response; he will probably also briefly mention the issue of Taiwan. His basic thread should run somewhat as follows. (It will emerge from a series of brief, seemingly disjointed, observations):

- The Soviet menace is growing. There is a storm, probably war, coming. The Soviet Union is looking toward that day with its vigorous military buildup and expansion of geopolitical influence. The West will be the first target and should be making preparations. For its part China is getting ready.
- Accordingly the US and China do have a "common opponent". This factor brought us together several years ago and is still the main rationale for our developing relationship. (However, whereas before the Chairman expressed this theme in terms of talking to a friend who is acting on a parallel track, in my last conversation with him the tone was more in terms of their being realistic while we and our friends were indulging in illusions.)
- In the face of this threat the US is maneuvering frantically, including our making of agreements with Moscow that are worse than worthless because they tend to mask Soviet intentions. It is not so much American collusion with Moscow as it is appeasement (whether calculated or not) reminiscent of Chamberlain, Daladier and Munich prior to World War II.
- In short, the US is "not reliable" as a world power. And we place the Soviet Union higher in our priorities than our allies, and much higher than China. Indeed we have even used China in order to work with the Soviets.

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- Soviet conventional forces are much larger than the West's, and the US would be reluctant to use nuclear weapons in a crisis. (The Chinese consider SALT a charade, MBFR as a dangerous device that gets our troops out of Europe; and they believe that Moscow is building up its military power generally while the West is not.)
- Europe is the key immediate area of struggle. The Europeans are soft, disunited, and indulging in illusions about the Soviets. The Helsinki Conference is but the latest and greatest example of naivete, if not appeasement. Furthermore, Europe's domestic structures are being undermined by weak political leadership, economic difficulties, and communist parties controlled by Moscow. If Europe were attacked, the US would pull a "Dunkirk" rather than risk American lives. Instead the US should work closely with Europe, build up NATO, and be prepared to defend the continent.
- Japan is an uncertain factor and will seek hegemony at some point. (The Chairman's reference last October to Japan's seeking of hegemony was a new theme and at variance with all recent Chinese statements on Japan. It may reflect their difficulties with the Japanese in negotiations over a peace and friendship treaty, which center on language concerning hegemony to which the Soviets have objected. Generally, however, the Chinese have swung to our view in recent years that the best way to prevent Japan from remilitarizing is to keep it closely anchored to the US under our nuclear umbrella and security treaty.) The US should work closely with Japan and pay a great deal of attention to this relationship. (The Chairman once scolded me for not giving Tokyo as much attention as I did Peking.)

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- The Middle East, Persian Gulf, and South Asia are other key areas where the Soviet Union is striving to increase its influence. The US should work "with two hands in the Middle East" (i.e., with the Arabs as well as Israel) so as to reduce Soviet influence. We should also work closely with other key countries such as Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey to counter such Soviet clients as Iraq, India, and Afghanistan.
- The US domestic scene is the source of much of our difficulties. The removal of President Nixon through Watergate was incomprehensible. The Congress, the media, and the public show signs of weariness, discord, and withdrawal.
- In the face of this strategic picture, the Chinese are prepared to go it alone in their resistance to Soviet expansionism, even if this means they are cursed by the world for being war-like. They will "dig tunnels deep, store grain, and oppose hegemony everywhere." They, of course, hope that the US, Europe and Japan, and other friendly nations, will join them in the geopolitical struggle. But if necessary they can handle the Soviet Union on their own, thanks to their vast population, indestructible spirit and inexhaustible patience.
- The big issue therefore is the international situation, and Taiwan is a small issue by comparison. The Chinese are patient on this matter and confident of its ultimate resolution, even if it takes 100 years. It is better for the US to maintain control over Taiwan for the time being, since it is filled with counterrevolutionaries, and in order to prevent other influences like the Soviet Union or an independence movement. (If taken literally the Chairman takes an even more relaxed view of Taiwan than other Chinese

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leaders, but there may well be sardonic overtones to his presentation. In addition, he tends to elide the issues of diplomatic relations between us and Peking on the one hand, and the future status of the island with respect to the Mainland on the other. These are two separate issues, in their eyes and our own.) Eventually China will probably have to fight for Taiwan, but it can wait for the time being.

#### Your Approach

The scope and Soviet Union papers for your trip give you the basic framework for your approach to this meeting and the essential themes that I believe you should express. You will not have an opportunity to make lengthy statements, but rather will be getting your positions across in a pattern of relatively brief interventions back and forth. The Chairman expects, and will appreciate, your taking a strong, principled stance. He will respect your sticking by your own convictions; indeed, he welcomes friendly quarreling. You should, of course, point out where we and the Chinese agree. But you should also candidly discuss our differences which you can describe as being primarily tactical rather than strategic.

I believe the following are some of the basic points that you will wish to make:

- You are strongly dedicated to the further strengthening of ties with the People's Republic of China. You believe it is in our fundamental national interest to develop this relationship and you will pursue it vigorously in the coming years.
- Our two countries share some basic common perceptions of the world situation. The United States will continue to play a strong role on the international scene. Your own convictions and record as a Congressman and President show your

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determination to have our country maintain a strong defense, work closely with our allies and be prepared to resist Soviet pressures.

- We pursue this policy as being in our own interest, not to do China any favors. However, it is objectively true that we have a "common opponent". This was one of the main reasons that our two nations came together after two decades and why it is in our mutual interest to continue to develop our bilateral relationship.
- At the same time each of our countries must pursue policies which it believes are tailored to its own situation and in its own national interest. We have to deal on many fronts with the Soviet Union because of our global concerns, and the fact that the Soviet Union is a superpower. Our basic strategy is to put ourselves and our friends in a position to contain Soviet expansionism. We believe the most effective way for the United States to do this is through a combination of hardheaded negotiations designed to test Soviet intentions and entangle them in a series of agreements, together with firm reactions to Soviet pressures whenever they occur.
- This double edged policy is necessary in order to demonstrate to the American people (and our various allies) that we are trying all reasonable courses of action; then in any crisis we can rally public support because it will be clear that Soviet policy gave us no other choice.
- The US has demonstrated its resolve in many instances -- e.g., in Berlin, the Caribbean, the Middle East (including the 1973 October alert), and currently as well in such areas as Angola and Portugal. We believe that

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action as well as rhetoric is required. In any event, we have no illusions, and we are keeping our powder dry. And we would consider a Soviet attack -- whether in the West or East -- would have serious implications for our own national security.

- We know that the Chinese disagree with some of our policies and prefer a more frontal approach to the Soviet Union. This may be suited to their situation. It is less suited to ours. We should respect each other's choice of tactical policies while keeping in mind that our strategic perceptions are similar. Certainly we won't convince each other through persuasion. But it is in neither side's interest to appear to be criticizing the other. We believe it is in our mutual interest to give the impression to the world that we are cooperating with each other within certain limits rather than two powers seeking to use each other. An impression of US-Chinese quarreling only benefits the Soviet Union.
- In any event the Chinese can be sure that we will never make any agreements with Moscow directed against Peking, and indeed have turned aside several Soviet suggestions to this end. We do not use China to jump to the Soviet Union.
- You and Secretary Kissinger have devoted a major portion of time in recent months to allied relations. This has included many bilateral meetings with European leaders, your first Presidential trip abroad to Japan, and the recent Economic Summit. This has been designed to rally Western nations politically and economically, in part so as to shore up defenses against possible Soviet threats. We would certainly defend Europe if it is attacked; our strong national interest would leave us no other choice.

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- Relations with Western Europe and Japan have been greatly strengthened and have never been more solid. We appreciate the Chinese statements to our allies on the need for close trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific ties.
- The southern flank of Europe, however, remains a serious problem -- e.g., Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece/Turkey. We are working vigorously in all these areas with our friends in a way that is compatible with Chinese interests.
- We have also pursued a determined policy in the Middle East. Our efforts to promote a settlement there and our greatly improved ties with Arab nations have the objective result of reducing Soviet influence in the region.
- In other areas of the world, we have taken heed of the Chairman's views expressed to Secretary Kissinger in past conversation that we should work not only with our European and Japanese allies, but also in other areas with friendly countries like Pakistan and Iran.
- A recent example of our efforts is Angola where there has been major Soviet (and Cuban) involvement. We have been working with friendly African forces to counter this by helping Angolan elements that China herself had been backing. Frankly we are sorry that the Chinese have withdrawn their efforts recently even as we have increased our own. We believe that action, as well as public statements, are necessary in such situations.
- The basic mood of the American people across our large country is healthy, with broad support for a strong national defense and international role. This is the real sentiment of the nation, rather than the atmosphere that sometimes persists in our capital, and this will be reflected in the election coming up. We have been in a turbulent period because of various domestic events, but this is a passing phase.

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-- You intend to pursue a normalization of our relations in line with the principles of the Shanghai Communique. We know that the Chairman is patient on the Taiwan issue, but we also know that this is a matter of principle for the Chinese. The direction of our policy is clear. We have every intention of completing the process. We will work to resolve our remaining differences but this will require some understanding by the Chinese of our concerns as well.

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